

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 5, 9-11 and 13-15 have been examined. Claims 1, 2, 5 and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), and claim 11 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Also, the Examiner has indicated that claims 9, 10, 14 and 15 contain allowable subject matter.

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,521,753 to Schloemann (“Schloemann”)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 5 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Schloemann.

A. Claim 1

Applicant has canceled claim 1, without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 is now moot.

B. Claim 2

Applicant submits that claim 2 is patentable over the cited reference. For example claim 2 recites that at least one through hole is formed in a ground plate, and an inner wall of the through hole is only directly electrically connected to the ground plate.

The Examiner maintains that Schloemann discloses the above feature. In particular, the Examiner maintains that ground plane conductor 118 discloses the claimed ground plate, and void 118' discloses the claimed through hole (Figure 11 of Schloemann). However, as shown in Figure 11, there is a second ground plane, i.e., ground plane conductor 128. The ground plane

conductor 128 also has a void 128'. As shown in Figure 12, the two ground planes are placed on each other and therefore are connected together. Accordingly, the inner wall of the alleged through hole 118' is not *only* directly electrically connected to the alleged ground plate 118, as recited in claim 2. Rather, the inner wall of the alleged through hole 118' is also directly electrically connected to the inner wall of the void 128' of the ground plane conductor 128.

Further, claim 2 recites that an aperture size of the through hole (of the ground plate) is smaller than a width of the signal line.

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner maintains that the aperture size of the void 118' (alleged through hole) is smaller than the width of the strip conductor 114 (alleged signal line). However, as shown in Figures 11 and 12, the aperture size of the void 118' of the ground plane conductor 118 is clearly larger than the width of both the strip conductor 114 and the strip conductor 128, even at the widest portions of the strip conductors, i.e., the center portions containing their respective voids. The void 118' is circular-shaped, while the voids of the strip conductors 114 and 128 are substantially oval-shaped and smaller in width. Further, Schloemann specifically teaches that the void 118' is formed so as to not significantly interfere with the coupling of the r.f. energy (col. 11, lines 19-21).

In view of the above, Applicant submits that claim 2 is not anticipated by Schloemann, and respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection.

C. Claim 5

Applicant submits that claim 5 is patentable over the cited reference. For example, claim 5 recites that at least one through hole is formed in a ground plate, and an inner wall of the through hole is only directly electrically connected to the ground plate.

As stated above, and shown in Figures 11 and 12 of Schloemann, there is a second ground plane, i.e., ground plane conductor 128. As shown, the ground plane conductor 128 also has a void 128'. Accordingly, the inner wall of the alleged through hole 118' is not *only* directly electrically connected to the alleged ground plate 118, as recited in claim 2. Rather, the inner wall of the alleged through hole 118' is also directly electrically connected to the inner wall of the void 128' of the ground plane conductor 128.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 5 is not anticipated by Schloemann, and respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection.

D. Claim 13

Applicant submits that claim 13 is patentable over the cited reference for at least analogous reasons as set forth above for claim 2 (in regard to the claimed aperture size of the through hole).

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Schloeman and U.S. Patent No. 6,483,714 to Kabumoto et al. (“Kabumoto”)

The Examiner has rejected claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Schloemann in view of Kabumoto.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. In particular, the filing date of Kabumoto (i.e. February 23, 2000) is after the filing date (i.e. September 20, 1999) of Applicant’s foreign priority document JP 11-266203. Accordingly, Applicant is hereby removing Kabumoto as a prior art reference by perfecting the claim to foreign priority. Submitted herewith is a certified English translation of JP 11-266203. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 11.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

As stated above, the Examiner has indicated that claims 9, 10, 14 and 15 are allowed.

IV. Newly Added Claims

Applicant has added new claims 16 and 17. Support for the newly added claims can be found in the non-limiting embodiments of Figure 1 and page 7 of the present Application.

V. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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